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Government
Publications

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ISSN 1180-4335

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 41^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 25 October 2016

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 25 octobre 2016

Standing Committee on Government Agencies

Intended appointments

Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Nominations prévues



Chair: Cristina Martins
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Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
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Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 25 October 2016

Mardi 25 octobre 2016

The committee met at 0901 in committee room 2.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Good morning, everyone. Welcome here this morning.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MS. RHEA HOARE

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Rhea Hoare, intended appointee as vice-chair, Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We have our first intended appointee today: Ms. Rhea Hoare, who is nominated as vice-chair, Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal. Please come forward and take your seat at the table. Thank you so much for being here this morning.

You may begin with a brief statement if you wish. Members of each party will then have 10 minutes to ask you questions. Any time used for your statement will be deducted from the government's time for questions. Once we get to that point, questioning will begin with the government side.

So, welcome. You may begin.

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Good morning, Madam Chairperson. Good morning, members of the committee. Thank you very much for this opportunity to appear before you regarding my proposed appointment as part-time vice-chairperson of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal.

I am a lawyer and a member of the Law Society of Upper Canada. I was called to the bar of Ontario in 1988. I studied law at Queen's University. I also have an honours bachelor of arts degree in history from Huron College at Western University.

My experience practising law has always been in courtrooms and hearing rooms. I have been a litigator and a decision-maker. During my legal career, I've held various positions which I think will equip me to work effectively as a vice-chairperson at the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal.

Much of my experience has been with the law concerning what happens when people are injured and what remedies they should receive. I hope to use this experience serving the public at the tribunal.

As an articling student, I practised personal injury law. I had significant experience learning the impact of all

types of injuries on people. I read and interpreted medical reports, dealt with medical evidence and witnesses, and argued for injured clients in court.

After my call to the bar, I was interested in public service, so, after a year of practising matrimonial litigation, I took a position as a refugee hearings officer with the Immigration and Refugee Board, which is a federal administrative law tribunal. A refugee hearings officer is essentially a crown attorney for refugee hearings. I was in the hearing room daily.

I became a senior refugee hearings officer, managing a team of 14 other hearing officers. Much like the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal, the Immigration and Refugee Board was then experiencing a very high volume of pending appeals. I learned to problem-solve around the issue of high volumes of incoming appeals so hearings could proceed fairly and expeditiously.

I then worked as a litigation counsel in the civil litigation section of the federal Department of Justice. I took this position as I felt that remaining with the Immigration and Refugee Board as a manager would take me too far away from gaining experience as a litigator.

At the Department of Justice, I worked on my own litigation files. I was also a member of various litigation teams working on larger cases at all levels of court, including the Supreme Court of Canada. The constitutional litigation I worked on helped to develop many aspects of our civil and charter rights, including the right to free speech and to free association, as well as various LGBTQ rights.

I also litigated various cases before the Canada Labour Relations Board and the Public Service Staff Relations Board. I wrote reports for various government departments on workplace conflicts, including problems arising from workplace harassment and dangerous working environments.

While at the Department of Justice, I also was the co-ordinator of civil agents. In addition to my own caseload, I supervised litigation on approximately 300 files dealing with personal injury claims from many different federal government departments. I applied the legal principles used in understanding and litigating injury claims. I also hired and instructed the lawyers who represented the federal government in these cases.

I eventually had an opportunity to return to the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada as a federally appointed tribunal member. I had daily experience as a

decision-maker at the immigration appeal division of the Immigration and Refugee Board. I heard appeals from deportation orders and sponsorship appeals. I usually heard two appeals a day, delivering written decisions on every appeal heard. I usually sat alone, but occasionally I sat in panels of three. I served at the board for 10 years, which meant I resolved thousands of cases. I have extensive experience in managing the proceedings in a hearing and managing a decision-maker's workload. I think this experience will allow me to be a valuable addition to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal.

While at the Immigration and Refugee Board, I was also, on occasion, acting assistant deputy chair, which was the manager of various GIC appointees. I trained and mentored new appointments. I worked on the national committee to design professional development programs for board members. When we received new immigration legislation from Parliament, I was tasked with hearing all the appeals under various sections of the new legislation so that a body of consistent case law could be developed. I also worked extensively in the board's alternative dispute resolution system, trying to streamline the hearing process for various eligible appeals.

When my appointment as a board member at the Immigration and Refugee Board ended after 10 years, which was the longest I was allowed to serve, I continued to work part-time for the board for a further two years, developing a training manual for new board members and training various new members.

I believe I have extensive experience which would allow me to serve effectively as a vice-chairperson of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal. If you have any questions, I would be pleased to answer them. Thank you for your time and for this opportunity to speak with you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much. We will begin questions with the government side. Ms. Vernile.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you very much for being here this morning and for wanting to put your name forward to serve on this board, committing yourself to public service. If you were to be appointed to this board, is there anything in particular you want to achieve? Do you have any goals?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: I'm very excited about the opportunity to be back in a hearing room again. I hope that I would be able to make a contribution to resolving appeals for the people who are appearing in front of the tribunal. I think that puts individuals who are appellants or companies who are involved in hearings in a situation that can be quite difficult for them, and I would like to help with resolving that. There are also subject matters that do come up in front of the tribunal that I'm particularly interested in, such as resolving post-traumatic stress disorder claims, which is an area of interest for me. I'm hoping that I can really just get back into hearings, which is what I consider to be my area of expertise, and help the board that way.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Along with all of your work experiences and your volunteer work, I see that you even

have time to be a certified yoga instructor. Where do you find the time?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: I was very lucky in that I was able to enrol in a two-year program of study, which is one of the longest programs in North America that was available here in Toronto to qualify as a yoga instructor. So I was lucky to be able to do that.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Have you ever been listed as supporting a political party, federal or provincial?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Back in the early 1990s, I was a member of the Ontario Liberal Party, but once I became an appointee federally, I had to step back from any membership or any volunteer work in particular organizations. We were asked not to have involvements outside of our workplace.

0910

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Do you feel that your past political experiences would in any way influence being on a board?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: No, I don't think so, because I look at the individual appeal. That, to me, is what is the important factor in being on a tribunal.

I also have had the experience of being on another tribunal and understanding that my independence as a decision-maker is a crucial aspect of the system working.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I want to thank you very much for being here today and for considering public service.

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Thank you. Thank you very much for your questions.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We will now turn the questions over to the opposition. Mr. Pettapiece.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Good morning to you.

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Good morning.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: You've answered a few of the questions already that I had listed here, but one of the things that we need to look at is wait times for a tribunal hearing. They're getting to be out of hand. This affects, certainly, people in all our ridings. I do get the odd complaint about people who are appealing to the WSIB on their decisions. A lot of the times they are going without their paycheques or whatever over this period of time.

I want to give you some figures that I have in front of me here. In 2014, the average wait time was 13.4 months. In 2015, it went up to 17.4 months. In the first half of 2016, the whole thing had an 18.5-month wait time to get an appeal. This is going the wrong way, in my opinion. Do you have any thoughts? Cases are different; I understand that. But this is affecting the livelihood of a number of people in the province. We should get this under control if we can. Do you have any thoughts on that?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: It's obviously a very serious issue. The way that I look at it is there are really two sort of levels that backlogs operate on. One is the individual appellant, which is what you've mentioned. You've spoken about people coming to your constituency office to talk with you about it.

The other thing is the level of the actual organization itself. As a tribunal member, my job would be to do

whatever I can at the level of the individual appellant to deal with that number of outstanding appeals. That means that I need to be prepared for individual hearings so that they go ahead. I need to be able to deal with any issues that might come up from the parties that might slow an appeal down. I need to do my homework before I ever get into the hearing room so that I am as ready as I can possibly be for that. So I consider that my position and my task at the tribunal would be to do the best that I can to make those individual hearings that are my responsibility come to a resolution as appropriately and as quickly as I can.

The other thing that I could offer is any assistance or any experience that I have should the chairperson of the tribunal require it. Should I be asked to make suggestions once I have some experience in this particular tribunal, then that's where maybe I can come forward and make a contribution to dealing with the outstanding caseload.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: You said "when you were asked." Would it be appropriate to make those suggestions before you are asked, if you see something going on?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Certainly, if I were hearing appeals and working along at something and I noticed an issue that was coming in front of me quite frequently, I think that it would be very appropriate for me to speak with other tribunal members, with the chair or the executive director, and say that I had noticed particular things, and then of course, be prepared to make suggestions. Because if I'm not prepared to come up with some sort of suggestion about various issues that I see, then that is not particularly helpful.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Would you be able to comment on the person who is appealing the case? Are there ways that they can be better prepared in order to help speed things up?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Well, I think that the tribunal offers people who come before it a quite thorough amount of information as to how they can prepare. I would be hoping that those sorts of issues are addressed before a hearing starts in front of me.

But, certainly, if issues come up during the course of the hearing, then the most important thing is to give the party that is directly affected by the issue a chance to further prepare, and to also allow the other party involved in the hearing to answer whatever questions might arise out of the issues that are before me in a hearing.

So I would certainly be giving people that opportunity. That's part of managing a hearing.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. I think the way the process works is fine, it's just that the time it takes to get there is the biggest issue. And if you've been denied a claim, your income is affected dramatically, and maybe benefits, too. So it's very difficult for these people to sit for—in 2016, 18 and a half months—waiting for a hearing. I would think, if you're appointed to this position, that maybe you could offer some suggestions as you get into the job or into the position that may help to speed

these things up, because it's very difficult, certainly, for the people involved.

That's all of the questions that I have.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Mr. Pettapiece. We'll now turn the questions over to Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning. How are you?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: I'm fine, Mr. Gates. How are you?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good. Just to follow up to my colleague with the PCs, I actually don't believe that any injured worker should have to wait as long as they're waiting today to get benefits and get to the appeal stage.

I've got a couple of questions here. I'll read them out to you and hopefully you can address them; I'd appreciate it.

Since 2012, the WSIAT has seen significant increases in the number of cases being appealed to that body, resulting in correspondingly significant increases in wait times for hearings. Meanwhile, in more or less that same time period, the WSIB has seen an increase in the number of reports and complaints regarding their increased use of paper doctors, their overruling of medical advice and the increased barriers to obtain adequate medical treatment faced by injured workers.

Do you think those two situations are related, and do you have any thoughts on how to address either of those problems?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: I want to make sure that I understand your question. You're asking me if I believe that the situation of—I'm sorry, help me out, Mr. Gates—

Mr. Wayne Gates: The use of—

Ms. Rhea Hoare: I'm a bit nervous so—

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, you don't have to be nervous, not with this group. There may be other groups that you would, but not this one. This one is pretty easy, so don't be nervous.

They're using paper doctors. So I get injured, I go to my doctor and my doctor says I've hurt my back and I can't go to work and these are the reasons why I can't. They get a doctor that never sees the patient, never looks at him, and then issues a report that he's okay to go back to work, or she's okay to go back to work.

The Ontario Federation of Labour has issued complaints about this for, well, it's about three or four years now, that are saying that this is wrong; that they shouldn't be using paper doctors; that if a doctor says that I've been injured and provides the medical documentation—which they do—what right does a paper doctor have of denying the claim; and that what happens once a claim is denied, in a lot of cases, puts the worker in really tough jeopardy.

Some people that are represented by a union will have a representative that can help them with the appeal. But in most workplaces, that's not the case. That's what's causing some of the backlog around appeals and certainly causing the hardship with injured workers across the province.

So does that help you with the question?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Yes, it does. I think that what's important to keep in mind and what I, as a former litigator and as a decision-maker, have to keep in mind is that it's an appeal hearing that I will be, hopefully, deciding or participating in. The appellant and the respondent are both going to be given ample opportunity to prepare the record that will come before tribunal on an appeal hearing.

0920

Hopefully, during that preparation, they will have an opportunity to address some of the issues that you have mentioned with sufficiency of medical evidence. Whether it requires visits to other doctors before coming to an appeal hearing to produce new evidence regarding an injury—there are many ways that the parties can prepare for an appeal hearing that will address some of the issues that come out of earlier levels of decision-making. Hopefully, as those appeals proceed in front of the tribunal, the tribunal itself, as an entity, will be developing case law and developing policies that deal, perhaps, with some of these issues that occur at earlier levels of the process. I think that's how it's addressed.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That's fine, but I'm going to read into the record so that you understand the degree of—this is a problem in the province, and I believe it's certainly causing more appeals.

In January 2016, the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Ontario Network of Injured Workers submitted a report to the Ontario Ombudsman requesting that the office investigate the WSIB's overruling of medical advice. More than 20 medical professionals contributed evidence in support of that submission. As of July of this year, the Ombudsman has not decided whether to conduct an investigation.

So it is a big issue. What happens is—like I said, I go to my doctor. My doctor knows I'm injured, whether it's physical or others, and they're saying, "Yes, Gates was injured on the job." But then they deny him the benefits. In a lot of cases, a lot of employers just deny no matter what. It is an issue. I'm just giving you a heads-up that that is a really big issue, and I think that's why there are more appeals. I thought it was important for you to hear that. I have a funny feeling that you'll probably win this vote 8 to 1 or 8 to 0, so you're going to be there, and I think it's important for me to highlight the concerns of injured workers in the Ontario Federation of Labour that are going on today. I raised this last week when we had somebody as well.

I'll just do this one here: A number of reports have indicated that the 10-year term limit set on members of the WSIAT is a barrier to the WSIAT handling its caseload in a more timely manner. Similarly, those same reports indicate there is a possibility that those term limits jeopardize the independence of the board. Do you have any thoughts on term limits?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: I'm a person who has experienced term limits at the immigration and refugee board, because there was a 10-year term limit on that federal appointment. I think that it's certainly an approach. I

think for some qualified people who come forward to be tribunal members, that is something that makes the job less interesting to them.

I think, in a way, that it's an opportunity for people who have experience as decision-makers to have some exposure to different subject matters. I don't think that it's either a good thing or a bad thing; it's just something that is part of the process. It does allow people with considerable experience at one tribunal to then take that experience as a decision-maker to a different tribunal. But for someone who, perhaps, hopes to be a decision-maker in a particular place for all of their career, then it really is a limiting approach. So I think it's not positive or negative; it's just a way of managing tribunals.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Two minutes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Just a quick question: Before I raised paper doctors, were you aware that that was an issue with the WSIB?

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Yes, I was, actually.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That's good. Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): That concludes the time allotted for this interview. I'm going to ask you to step down. The concurrences will be considered following all of the interviews. Thank you.

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Thank you very much, everyone, for your time this morning. I appreciate it.

MR. CHRIS TAMBAKIS

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Chris Tambakis, intended appointee as trustee, Centennial Centre of Science and Technology (Ontario Science Centre).

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Our next intended appointee today is Mr. Chris Tambakis, nominated as trustee, Centennial Centre of Science and Technology (Ontario Science Centre). I'm going to ask you to please come forward, Mr. Tambakis, and take a seat at the table.

Welcome. Thank you very much for being here today. You may begin with a brief statement if you wish. Members of each party will then have 10 minutes to ask you questions. Any time used for your statement will be deducted from the government side's time for questioning. Once we get there, the questioning will begin with the official opposition. You may begin.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Thank you very much for having me here this morning. That in itself—to have it deducted—is very appealing. I actually don't have any prepared statements. Since you have all of my material in front of you and you've requested me here today, I assume that you all have some questions. I thought we would focus on the questions you have so that we can address your needs, rather than me providing you with a summary of what you already have in front of you.

With that, I'll turn it to you, Madam Chair, and ask the questions to begin.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We are now going to start with the official opposition. Mr. Cho.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Good morning.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Good morning.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Could you tell us why you applied to be trustee of the Ontario Science Centre?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: That's an excellent question. I could give you a long answer which goes all the way back to childhood, when I used to attend the Science Centre as a kid, when it was literally in my backyard. But, most recently, I spent a number of years raising money for the Science Centre, for the Innovators' Ball. Actually, this year's Innovators' Ball is tomorrow night, where we'll raise significant funds for the Science Centre again.

So I became involved in raising funds for the Science Centre. How I turned my attention to it again was when a number of people who had been on the board approached me because of my experience both in fundraising and governance in public entities and said, "You would be a good fit for the Science Centre." I spent some time as a volunteer first to decide that, in fact, it would be a good fit and that I could add value to the organization, and then I actually decided that I would put my name forward.

Just to that end, as well, my primary focus at the Science Centre has been kids. Most of the activities that I have been focused on have been raising funds for the Science Centre to make it more relevant and more accessible to children and families. That's why I'm interested in it.

I also think it's a wonderful institution in Toronto that, if we don't spend time and attention on it, could go by the wayside. That would be a horrific waste.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Are you aware of any particular challenges facing the Science Centre?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: The Science Centre has the same challenges that every organization does: relevance. It has to stay relevant. The Science Centre opened in 1964, if my memory is correct, and it was a great place—and it still is a great place. But science and technology are moving rapidly. Every day there's something new.

There are a lot of things happening around the Science Centre, in the environment and in the community around it, and for it to continue to be a centre, a hub, a knowledge base, it needs to stay relevant, which means it has to be on top of its game every single day. It has to be at the head of the curve, not following the curve.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: So I guess you know the Science Centre pretty well. What are your opinions on the current financial situation at the Science Centre? Are you aware?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: First of all, I'm not on the board yet as a trustee, so I only have the information that's available to me as a member of the public, and, actually, some of the briefing information. I am aware that the Science Centre receives a good chunk of its funding from the Ontario government; last year, it was about \$15 million or \$16 million. It receives funding from its fundraising activities, which is not a significant

amount but is an important amount. Then, of course, it has its events, its admissions and parking and other revenue line items that generate revenue for it.

0930

It's supposed to be a not-for-profit, and it operates that way, but it does also need to generate revenue for reserves to regenerate and renew itself. I would say that the Science Centre does okay financially, but it could be doing much better. It has a great location, it has a great product and it has a great audience, and we need to know how to harness those better to derive more value out of the Science Centre so that it creates a better financial picture, which makes it more sustainable going forward.

A long answer to a short question; I'm sorry.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Do I have one more question?

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Oh, you have six minutes.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Okay. I'd like to ask you one more question.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Please.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: When you take this position as a trustee, if I ask you just to have one change you'd like to achieve in this organization, what kind of change do you expect to change and how are you going to do that?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: That's an excellent question. I could give you a million answers, but I think relevance is the one I'm going to fall back to. If, at the end of my tenure, the Science Centre has re-energized itself to be relevant, remain relevant and be at the front of that curve and it's in good financial standing, whether that includes government funding, public sector, private sector, community, then I think I will be very happy. Does that answer your question, sir?

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Yes, sort of.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: You still have three minutes probably, so please—

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): You still have four and a half.

Interjection.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Yes, I know. I'm happy to.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Mr. Cho. Mr. Pettapiece.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Just a comment: I would suggest that if you're going to have some input into the operation of the Science Centre—my grandchildren have gone there a number of times, and—

Mr. Chris Tambakis: I hope you took them there as well, and it wasn't just your kids.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Well, actually no; I didn't get there.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: So you know what you're doing this weekend; right?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: But as you say, technology is going very fast. I certainly have not kept up with technology like maybe I should have, but I suppose those of my generation would rather not do stuff like that. It was interesting that when they came home, they were talking

about things that I hadn't ever thought of or didn't know anything about. So I would suggest that maybe you could have a grandparents' room to prepare them for this type of thing so they don't look as dumb in front of their grandchildren as they might think they are.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: I like that.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Mr. Pettapiece. I hope you enjoy your trip to the Ontario Science Centre this weekend.

Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I don't even know how to respond about grandfathers looking as dumb as we do.

First of all, I want to congratulate you, because it is incredible. I've been to the Science Centre a number of times on school trips with my daughter as a chaperone. I've always enjoyed it. I'll start with that. School trips, as far as kids coming to the Science Centre: Are they increasing; are they decreasing? Would you have any idea of that, seeing you're there quite a bit?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: I have an excellent idea of that because one of the focuses for the Innovators' Ball, which is what I've chaired and co-chaired for the prior two balls, is focused—one of the big parts is the adopt-a-class program. When I was younger—much younger, but I'm not a grandfather. When I was much younger, it was part of our curriculum. I'm sure everyone in this room from Windsor to as far east as you can think of got on a school bus at some point, made it to the ROM, made it to the AGO and made it to the Science Centre; right? It was part of our curriculum—I'm going to make the assumption that it was part of our curriculum because we all got to go, and everybody got to go. As time has gone by, those things don't exist as liberally as they used to. The trips are now funded by families, and, unfortunately, that leans towards those families who can afford to send their kids: pay for the school bus, pay for the lunch, pay for the admission if there's a nominal admission etc. As a result, needy neighbourhoods or less affluent neighbourhoods or parts of the province aren't making the trips. or it's not as available to them.

So the answer to your question is: Class trips were dropping because they were not able to get there because there isn't the funding either from the families or from the school to be able to do it. Unfortunately, it's one of those things that falls off the table. The adopt-a-class program is: For \$1,000, which is a lot of money, but when you think about the bang for your buck, so to speak, you get to send a school class to the Science Centre, full thing—school bus, lunch, admission, experience, and back. Last year, we raised, in addition to our regular fundraising for the evening—just the adopt-a-class, where we actually put up our hands around the room, we raised about \$88,000. We sent 88 school classes to the Science Centre last year that wouldn't otherwise have gone. To that end, the answer is that it's increasing because of that volunteer fundraising.

I have to tell you that personally one of the things I find most rewarding about it is—and I have to congratulate both the Science Centre, because they're smart, and

the teachers. All the kids write thank-yous and they paint pictures. These used to come to the Science Centre, and they'd go into somebody's file. The kids—it was amazing: "Dear Mr. Scientist," "Dear Helper," "Dear Science Centre Guy," whatever it was, because they knew there was somebody who had sponsored their class—wrote these thank-yous. The Science Centre used to put these in a file. I said, "Why are you putting them away? You should be putting these up on the wall. You should be exhibiting these." Those who come appreciate what other people have perceived and thought of and received, and also recognize they're fortunate that they're getting to go to such a wonderful place.

So now, if you go to the Science Centre you'll see that when some go into what's now going to be called the family room—not the grandpa room—you're going to see these drawings. You look at them, you read them and you spend a little time, and it brings a tear to your eye. It's not health sciences; it's not critical; it's not things that are going to save people's lives, but it does change people's lives. As a kid, I spent a ton of time at the Science Centre and benefited from it in all sorts of ways.

So to answer your question—I know that was a long answer, but it comes back to both of your questions and comments: It's about the kids and it's about families. The classes are going, and that means parents go and they chaperone their kids, and it's a great experience that way.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I compliment you on realizing that there is a big difference today. Schools are fundraising, quite frankly, and some schools have better opportunities, live in better areas; their fundraiser makes \$15,000. My wife was a principal in a school that was more challenged, with a lot more needy. They got excited if they raised \$1,500. So there certainly is a need for the program, and I'm glad that you're doing that as well. It's nice to see somebody who comes here who has a passion for what they like to become a trustee. You obviously have the passion, and I think that's half the battle. If you have the passion to do something, you do a great job.

I won't even ask you the rest of my questions because I know how important it is to make sure we get our kids to the Science Centre. With the passion that you have, I think it will only help.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Thank you for that. I appreciate it. I don't do anything that I'm not excited about or passionate about. I take time from everything else I do, with all the 24 hours. If I'm going to carve up part of my 24 hours, I'd better really enjoy it because this is a finite life.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Fundraising is the hardest thing to do. It's a tough game to do fundraising.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: You said "kids." We can't focus just on the kids because "kids" is a circle of families; right? It's not just about the kids; it's also about getting families out there.

Far too much time with families, notwithstanding that this is a science and technology space that we're talking about, is spent focused on an iPad or on a TV or on some video screen. You get to the interactive areas of the

Science Centre where moms and dads, grandmothers and grandfathers—mostly grandmothers; the grandfathers are a little bit lax in doing it—I'm just kidding.

Interjection.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: You put yourself in the cross-hairs; I'm sorry.

You see the families interacting, and it's fantastic. It's what we need to continue to build our communities.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's a good call.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Yes. Thank you.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you.

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The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Mr. Gates.

We will now turn the questioning over to the government side. Ms. Vernile.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Good morning, Mr. Tambakis. Thank you very much for appearing before this committee and putting your name forward to serve as a trustee for the Ontario Science Centre.

Like you, I was intrigued by the science centre as a child when I went there around age 10 for the first time. It was fairly new at that time—

Mr. Chris Tambakis: So just a few years ago, I assume.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Yes, exactly.

What blew my socks off at the time was this metal globe that they had that you could put your hand on, and your hair would stand on end. My hair was longer back then. Do they still have that there?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Not only do they still have it, but it's a little bit of a bugaboo for me—you've sort of poked me in a spot that I'm frustrated with. Yes, they have it, and it's fantastic. Every time we do a fundraiser for the science centre or a fundraising activity, I tell the science centre that they should transport that to the place or to the hall and let everyone do it, because everyone remembers that and it's a lot of fun. Of course, they tell me, "Well, that's difficult," and this and that.

This year, they made a special effort to try and actually make that happen. At the Innovators' Ball this year we will, for the first time, have it not only as an exhibit in the science centre, but as a fundraiser for people to actually enjoy it as well.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I mention that because you have a great opportunity, when you're appealing to young people to come to the science centre, for the parents and grandparents who remember that globe, along with some of the other experiences, to draw them in as well.

You've said that you want to make the science centre more relevant and accessible. What are your ideas for doing that?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Well, I think "content"—which is a little bit of an overused word today because we think of online things. I think the Science Centre has to not forget the past, because science isn't all about technology and computer chips; it is about rocks and birds and nature. But it also has to have more of what we're going to be going into in the future to capture people's attention

and also to inspire people. So I think we need to look at what exhibits we can do, what sharing we can do globally with other science centres—actually domestically and globally, quite frankly. How can we take the game up in terms of exhibits and make it more—when we went to the science centre, you went because of course you'd go. Now, people think about whether they should go. They shouldn't be thinking about whether they should be going; they should be saying, "We are going." So whatever it needs to be to make it more attractive, more interesting, more relevant to people—and I haven't got the answer to it entirely. I think that is what I'm going to spend a lot of time digging into.

There are some things that are going to change for the Science Centre naturally, in terms of the subway—the LRT going along Eglinton is going to make it more accessible for those that otherwise would have to take more cumbersome transit. That will be a wonderful addition. And I think just reviving the premises themselves—making them a little more user-friendly. Barrier-free access exists there very, very well, so I don't think it's an accessibility issue. It's more about making the space more entertaining and enjoyable for people.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: In my community of Kitchener-Waterloo, we have the Institute for Quantum Computing. We also have the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: I have a BlackBerry in my pocket.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Okay, I'm glad to hear that.

At PI, at Perimeter, they have open houses a couple of times a year, and when they do, they'll have 20,000 people who will go through on a weekend. Do you see value in connecting with some of these places and finding out how they do what they're doing?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: A hundred per cent. I think I said that we should be collaborating with other science centres or other learning centres around the world, not just in our own neighbourhood or our own community or with Waterloo, as an example. What are they doing in BC? What are they doing up at Science North in Sudbury? What are they doing in the United States? What are they doing over in Copenhagen?

So let's learn. That learning is a lot easier than it used to be because we don't actually have to travel to those places. We can communicate with those groups, whether it's Skype calls or video calls, and start sharing information and bringing experiences to the Science Centre.

I absolutely think one of the things they should be doing is expanding their content through collaboration, as opposed to trying to be individual about it, just, "What are we going to produce ourselves?" No, no. Let's see what they are doing over there. What can we do that's a synergy to that?

I should also tell you that the Science Centre does have community days as well where they open the doors to open houses. They have about a million people a year that come through the Science Centre, so it's a fairly robust place, but it should be two million.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I think there's great value, too, in connecting with popular culture. Some people think that you might be dumbing down the science, but say, for instance, there's a new Star Wars or Star Trek movie that's out there. If you can somehow capitalize on that, leverage that, to bring people in to explain the science behind that, it brings people in through the door, and you can give them a big dose of science at the same time.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Yes. A couple of years ago we had the history of rock 'n' roll, which was a huge exhibit and did very, very well. It was all about music, so the younger generation was completely enamoured with it—by the way, so was the older generation, because it wasn't just all about pop music today; it was also about some of old-time rock 'n' roll.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Grandpas like Mr. Pettapiece?

Mr. Chris Tambakis: I didn't say that.

Anyways, I hope that answers your question.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any further questions from the government side? No? Then that concludes the time allotted for this interview.

Thank you very much. You may step down and take your seat.

Mr. Chris Tambakis: Thank you very much for your time this morning. I appreciate it.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We will now consider the concurrence for Ms. Rhea Hoare, nominated as vice-chair, Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal. Would someone please move the concurrence? Mr. Qaadri?

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Rhea Hoare, nominated as vice-chair, Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Congratulations, Ms. Hoare.

Ms. Rhea Hoare: Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We will now consider the concurrence for Mr. Chris Tambakis, nominated as trustee, Centennial Centre of Science and Technology, or Ontario Science Centre. Would someone please move the concurrence? Mr. Qaadri, please.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Chris Tambakis, nominated as trustee, Centennial Centre of Science and Technology (Ontario Science Centre).

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Congratulations, Mr. Tambakis.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We have three deadline extensions that need to be considered here.

Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointment of Meric Gertler, nominated as member, Toronto Waterfront Re-

vitalization Corp., from the August 26, 2016, certificate—the deadline expires October 25, 2016—and extend it to November 24, 2016? Do we have unanimous agreement on this?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Yes.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Yes? Extended.

Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointee of Jayashree Sengupta, nominated as member and vice-chair, Child and Family Services Review Board and the Custody Review Board, Social Justice Tribunals Ontario, from the September 30, 2016, certificate deadline expiring October 30, 2016, extending it to November 29, 2016? Do we have unanimous agreement on this extension?

Interjections: Yes.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Extension granted.

Do we have unanimous agreement to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointment of John Wilson, nominated as member and vice-chair, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Appeal Tribunal and member, Board of Negotiation, from the September 30, 2016, certificate—the deadline expires October 30, 2016—extension to November 29, 2016?

Do we have unanimous agreement for this extension?

Interjections: Yes.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Extension granted.

If there is no—yes, Mr. Pettapiece?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: One question: When these extensions are asked for—I would suspect the applicant is asking for these extensions—is there any reason given for that?

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): I am not sure—

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Are we—is that required?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Sylwia Przewdziecki): So the extension is an extension of the amount of time that the committee has to consider the appointment. The standing orders say that the committee has 30 days from the date of the certificate to consider an intended appointee. Given the limited time that the committee has to meet, occasionally the committee doesn't get to a certain appointment within the 30 days. Then, by unanimous agreement, the standing orders provide that the committee may extend these deadlines to maintain its—

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. So it's because of this committee that these extensions are being granted, because we just can't look after the number of people most of the time; is that correct?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Sylwia Przewdziecki): Yes, by unanimous agreement the committee may extend a number of deadlines that the standing orders built into the process.

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Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I understand that, but it's just that the amount of time we have to deal with these is not sufficient. That's why we're granting these extensions. What I'm getting at here is that if somebody is booked to

come in today—most times they're prepared to do that—and then we can't get to them, we have to book them another day.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Sylwia Przedziecki): Our office says it's best to book the interviewees in the order in which they're selected. Those who have been waiting the longest for the interview are the next to appear. Of course, we also have to work with the schedules of the intended appointees, so occasionally they have scheduling conflicts, for instance, and can't come until a certain day.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: So do we have much of a backlog?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Sylwia Przedziecki): Actually, you should have in front of you the chart.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I have that here. I have that in front of me.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Sylwia Przedziecki): That should be up to date to the most recent certificate. Based on the chart that you have, it looks like we have—not including the two we heard from today—five standing appointments.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: We're getting into a season now where people are going to be going away on holidays and that type of thing. At least some people get to go away on holidays.

Mr. James J. Bradley: Not MPPs.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: It's only October.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: No, we're getting to the season. My point is this: I would suspect that if we're going to be doing things like this, that we're going to run into conflicts this winter with people who aren't going to be able to make it, so then you keep extending again. I just wonder if there's a system to get things up to date; that's what I'm getting at.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): The next two are scheduled already, so that will take two off of this backlog, if you will. As the Clerk mentioned, oftentimes it is trying to accommodate the schedule of the appointee; right? Sometimes there are changes that have to occur because of that, and extensions have to be granted through unanimous agreement for that as well.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I can fully understand that, but if we're the ones that are doing it—it's the appointee that can't come because of whatever issue. I can understand those things, but if it's because of this committee that this backlog grows, it's not fair to the people who are wanting appointments.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Sylwia Przedziecki): The committee continues to receive certificates, even when the House does not sit, and the subcommittee retains the right to make selections even during a recess. This committee does have the right to meet during an extended recess such as the summer or the winter adjournment. It's at the request of the subcommittee. The committee may meet no more than three times per month, but without additional authority of the House, the committee does have the authority in the standing orders to meet for the purpose of dealing with intended appointments during a recess. That is an opportunity for the committee to deal with a number of them on a given day.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Mr. Bradley?

Mr. James J. Bradley: Is it the case, then, that if the person is not before the committee within 30 days, they're automatically appointed unless there is an extension? It's an automatic appointment, so if you look at it in terms of opposition and government, it's really a benefit to the opposition that there be an extension, because otherwise the person just gets appointed. I think that was my recollection when I was Chair of this committee decades ago.

The point you make is a very good point, but if we don't deal with it and we don't extend, they're automatically appointed and you don't get a chance—none of us get a chance—to question them.

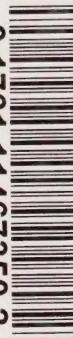
Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Madam Chair, I understand that. That's good. My point is not making it difficult for people who are applying. We put them off because of our issues mostly, not their issues. That's all it was.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Mr. Pettapiece.

If there is no further business, the committee is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 0955.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

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Mrs. Cristina Martins (Davenport L)

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Mrs. Cristina Martins (Davenport L)

Mr. Randy Pettapiece (Perth–Wellington PC)

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord L)

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Clerk / Greffière

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